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ABSTRACT

One mandate of the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 is that students develop a writing portfolio. The Kentucky Department of Education and AEL, Inc., collaborated to help schools discern areas for improvement in their writing programs, then developed a needs assessment process instrument, the School Study of Writing Instruction (SSWI). This report summarizes evaluative data collected from participants in 1999 at sessions to train them as potential facilitators for schools interested in conducting a SSWI, a process in the form of a handbook which lets schools compare different perspectives about the writing portfolio program. Data from interviews, reports, and evaluation forms indicate that participants considered the SSWI a well-designed, research-based, self-explanatory tool that schools could use in improvement efforts targeting writing instruction. They seemed pleased with the potential benefits of the process and felt the handbook had great utility for consolidation planning and needs assessment. The training sessions were well-received and successfully accomplished their purpose of introducing the research findings and study process, preparing participants to promote use of the SSWI in schools, and instructing participants in required tasks. Appended are a training agenda, evaluation forms, and a completed evaluation standards checklist. (SM)

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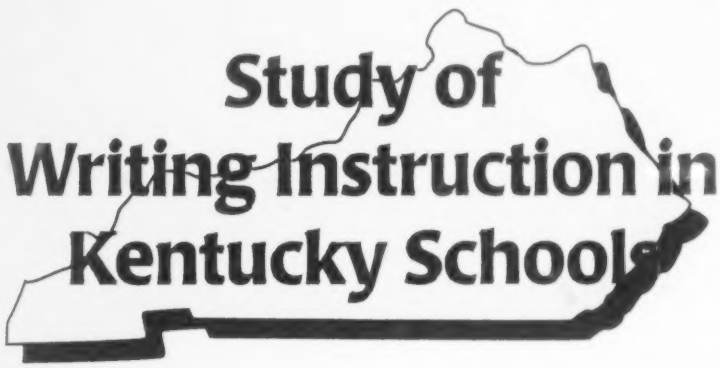

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Evaluation of the Facilitator Training in the *School Study of Writing Instruction*

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

One of the mandates of the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) of 1990 is that students develop a writing portfolio. Ultimately, schools in Kentucky are expected to elevate the average rating of students' portfolios to the benchmark of *proficient*. To aid in this endeavor, the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) and AEL, Inc. began a collaborative research and development project in 1996 to help schools discern areas for improvement in their writing programs. A collaborative research team composed of KDE and AEL staff planned a series of site visits to ascertain the indicators of quality writing programs. Through site visits to 29 schools, the team identified 36 indicators that differentiated writing scores and programs in *continuously improving* schools from those in *continuously declining* schools. Based on these indicators, the team designed a needs assessment process instrument called the *School Study of Writing Instruction (SSWI)*. This process, in the form of a handbook, enables a school to compare different role groups' perspectives about the writing portfolio program. The *SSWI* was pilot tested in the fall of 1998 and field tested in the spring of 1999. Experiences from these tests demonstrated that, while it was possible to complete the self-study without outside help, facilitator assistance was advantageous for schools carrying out the study. The collaborative team decided to offer facilitator training in the study process for educators who would be in a position to work with schools wishing to undertake the study. The purpose of the training was three-fold: to introduce the research findings and study process to persons in positions of instructional authority or influence in the state, to prepare participants to promote the use of the *SSWI* in schools, and to instruct participants in the tasks required to facilitate the study. The target audience included principals who were members of the Kentucky Leadership Academy, regional service center directors, state writing program staff, directors and staff of the state centers for the National Writing Program, district curriculum coordinators, and Highly Skilled Educators (HSEs, i.e., educational leaders designated to assist low-performing schools).

Four sessions were held in 1999 to train individuals as potential facilitators of schools interested in conducting a *SSWI*. Each 1-day session constituted a complete training and was held in a location chosen from different geographic areas to accommodate educators from around the state: November 3, Convention Center Inn, Greenville; November 4, Northern Kentucky University, Covington; November 17, Jenny Wiley State Park, Prestonsburg; and November 18, Days Inn, London. Upon arrival, each participant received a copy of the self-study handbook—a process manual in a three-ring binder. The study includes three main steps: (1) interviews, (2) report, and (3) ratings and priorities. The interview questions, report topics, and rating categories correspond to the 36 quality indicators of improving students' writing portfolio scores. They deal with issues of administrative support, professional development, school climate, writing program coordination, writing portfolios and writing in general, instructional strategies, family and community involvement, and assessment of the writing program's value for students. The interviews are the data upon which all subsequent analyses are based. Each handbook also includes an introductory overview, a section for school planning, and facilitator notes. All handbook materials are provided both in print and on disk.

The purpose of this report is to summarize evaluative data collected from participants at the training sessions. The primary audience includes staff of the U. S. Office of Educational Research and Improvement, AEL, and KDE. Other audiences include staff of the Kentucky Leadership Academy, regional service centers, national and state writing programs, HSEs, and other educators.

Altogether, 198 individuals attended one of the training sessions: 41 at session 1, 40 at session 2, 59 at session 3, and 58 at session 4. An evaluation form was developed that consisted of 18 Likert-type items on a 5-point scale of satisfaction (1 = Not at all/Very little to 5 = Very much) with various aspects of the training related to content, presentation, and utility, as well as 2 open-ended response items soliciting insight into the areas of strength and weakness in the training. This form was administered at the first and second training sessions. The form was then revised to capture additional data about the handbook contents. The revised form consisted of 14 Likert-type items on the same 5-point scale of satisfaction and 3 open-ended response items. This version was administered at the third and fourth training sessions. The project coordinator attended each of the four training sessions to distribute and collect the forms at the conclusion of each. Data were entered into SPSS for Windows for analysis and qualitative data were categorized by theme.

Findings. Response rates varied among the sessions: 83% of the participants completed the evaluation form for session 1, 82% for session 2, 58% for session 3, and 57% for session 4. Cronbach Alpha coefficients for each of the four administrations of the evaluation form were all at or above .90, indicating a high level of internal consistency among the items. Participants seemed very satisfied with various aspects of the training, as depicted by item ratings. For session 1, 15 of the 18 items had average ratings above 4.0; for session 2, 16 items had average ratings at or above 4.0. For sessions 3 and 4, all 14 items had average ratings above 4.0. Participants viewed the handbook itself as the most beneficial part of the training, noting that it was well organized and self-explanatory. Their most frequent suggestion for improvement was to devote more time to the report writing and rating steps and less time on the interviews. Participants in sessions 3 and 4 viewed the *SSWI* material as helpful, beneficial, and useful.

Conclusions and recommendations. Given participants' ratings and comments, we conclude that the *SSWI* is viewed as a well-designed, research-based, and self-explanatory tool that schools could use in their improvement efforts targeting writing instruction. Respondents seem particularly pleased with the potential benefits of the process and feel the handbook has great utility for consolidation planning and needs assessment. We recommend that AEL continue investigating ways to market this product as a mechanism to help schools in their ongoing improvement efforts.

The *SSWI* training sessions were well received and successfully accomplished their three-fold purpose of introducing the research findings and study process, preparing participants to promote use of the *SSWI* in schools, and instructing participants in the required tasks. Respondents seem well satisfied with the format and content of the training, in particular noting the usefulness of the material and their increased understanding of the *SSWI*. However, we recommend that staff investigate and remediate for future trainings the circumstances that led to the low evaluation response rate for sessions 3 and 4, even though staff were on hand to collect the forms. Results for these two sessions may be skewed due to the high nonresponse rate.

In general, participants seem to best understand step 1 of the *SSWI* process, which focuses on the interviews. Less well understood are step 2 (report writing) and step 3 (rating and setting priorities). This perception is reflected in numerous participant comments that too much time was devoted to the initial step and not enough time was provided for covering the later topics. Therefore, if future training sessions are offered, more time and focus should be given to these two critical steps.

Finally, many participants agree that it would be more useful to receive the handbook before the training, which would allow them to review and become at least somewhat familiar with the materials in advance of the training. We recommend that the handbook be disseminated prior to the training and that participants receive copies of the overheads used during the training.

INTRODUCTION

Background

One of the mandates of the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) of 1990 is that students develop a writing portfolio (Kentucky Department of Education, 1990, 1998). Ultimately, schools in Kentucky are expected to elevate the average rating of students' portfolios to the benchmark of *proficient*. To aid in this endeavor, the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) and AEL, Inc. (formerly Appalachia Educational Laboratory, Inc.) began a collaborative research and development project in 1996 (AEL, 1997). A research team composed of KDE and AEL staff was formed. The goal of the project was to help schools discern areas for improvement in their writing programs.

In 1996, the collaborative research team planned a series of site visits to ascertain the indicators of quality writing programs. Through site visits to 29 schools, the research team identified 36 indicators that differentiated writing scores and programs in *continuously improving* schools from those in *continuously declining* schools. The indicators of successful writing programs address such issues as professional development, instructional strategies, administrative support, and family and community involvement.

Based on the indicators that they had identified during the site visits, the collaborative research team designed a needs assessment process instrument called the *School Study of Writing Instruction* (AEL & KDE, 1999). This process, in the form of a handbook, enables a school to compare different role groups' perspectives about the writing portfolio program. The comparison is made available to the entire faculty for school-wide awareness and discussion. Eventually, the results are used to set priorities and plan actions for improvement of a school's writing program.

A pilot test of the *School Study of Writing Instruction* was conducted in the fall of 1998 (Parrish et al., 1999a) and a field test completed in the spring of 1999 (Parrish et al., 1999b). Experiences from the pilot and field tests of the *School Study of Writing Instruction* demonstrated that, while it was possible to complete the self-study without outside help, facilitator assistance was advantageous for schools carrying out the study.

The collaborative team decided to offer facilitator training in the study process for educators who would be in a position to work with schools wishing to undertake the study. The training for potential facilitators was designed by members of the team who were former KDE writing consultants. They and other members of the research team from AEL met in July 1999 to debrief about lessons learned from the pilot and field tests of the *School Study of Writing Instruction*. During this 2 ½ day meeting, the training designers began to plan the agenda for the training. They completed it during subsequent contacts over the next few weeks. At the same time, a team member developed facilitator notes based on field-test experiences. These notes were added to the process manual.

Content Validity

Content validity of the *School Study* instrument was determined in two stages, each consisting of several steps. The first stage involved identifying the variables for examining writing programs (Coe et al., 1999a, 1999b). First, indicators were derived from the parameters of Kentucky's writing program (see KDE, 1994). Second, the collaborative research team developed draft interview protocols around the initial indicators, tested them in exploratory visits to 7 Kentucky schools, and refined them. Third, the research team identified 43 schools with consistently improving writing scores and 18 with consistently declining scores. Based on site visits to 22 of the improving schools and 7 of the declining schools, in which more than 100 teachers, 200 randomly selected students, and 50 administrators were interviewed, team members established 36 indicators of successful writing programs (Coe et al., 1999a, 1999b). A comparison of the difference in mean scores between the 22 schools with improving scores and 7 schools with declining scores verified the indicators' capability to differentiate writing programs. These steps encapsulate the process by which the indicators were validated.

The second stage of validation involved creating the *School Study of Writing Instruction* as a process/instrument for school use. First, it was designed around the indicators identified in the research stage. Second, it was designed to foster the involvement of several school stakeholder groups in studying a school's writing program, particularly with the inclusion of students as informants of writing instruction. Finally, to enhance utility, the *School Study of Writing Instruction* was revised through several iterations based on meetings of the collaborative research team, on the pilot test, and on the field test.

Training Materials

Upon arrival at the training site each participant received a copy of the self-study handbook that had been revised in light of the field test and that included the facilitator notes. The *School Study of Writing Instruction (SSWI)* handbook is a process manual in a three-ring binder. The study includes three main steps: (1) interviews, (2) report, and (3) ratings and priorities. The interview questions, report topics, and rating categories correspond to the 36 quality indicators of improving students' writing portfolio scores. They deal with issues of administrative support, professional development, school climate, writing program coordination, focus on writing portfolios and writing in general, instructional strategies, family and community involvement, and assessment of the writing program's value for students. The interviews are the data upon which all subsequent analyses are based.

The handbook includes an introductory overview, a section for each of the three main steps listed above, and a supplemental section for school planning. Facilitator notes were added to the handbook after the field test was completed. All handbook materials are provided both in print and on computer disk. Handbook pages were copied and distributed so that participants could take a clean copy of the handbook with them at the conclusion of the training.

Dates, Locations, and Formats of the Training Sessions

Four independent sessions were held in 1999 to train individuals as potential facilitators for schools interested in conducting a *School Study of Writing Instruction*. Each 1-day session constituted a complete training. An AEL staff member, who was part of the collaborative research team, coordinated planning the four sessions and supported the efforts of the trainers. Altogether, there were five trainers from the research team (some of whom had also designed the training) who divided the training responsibilities among themselves, two per session.

Each of the four training sessions was held in a location chosen from different geographic areas to accommodate educators from around the state: November 3, Convention Center Inn, Greenville; November 4, Northern Kentucky University, Covington; November 17, Jenny Wiley State Park, Prestonsburg; and November 18, Days Inn, London. The training offered an overview of the study process and practice in its elements (see the agenda in Appendix A). Attendees were expected to assume their own costs for transportation and meals other than lunch, but received the training and materials at no charge.

Purpose of the Training Sessions

The purpose of the four sessions was three-fold: (1) to introduce the research findings and study process to persons in positions of instructional authority or influence in the state, (2) to prepare participants to promote the use of the *SSWI* in schools, and (3) to instruct participants in the tasks required to facilitate the study.

Audience for the Sessions

Persons invited to the four sessions included principals who were members of the Kentucky Leadership Academy (which provides training similar to that of Highly Skilled Educators to build capacity for school improvement), regional service center directors, state writing program staff, directors and staff of the state centers for the National Writing Program, district curriculum coordinators, and Highly Skilled Educators (i.e., educational leaders designated to assist low-performing schools).

Purpose and Audience for Report

The purpose of this report is to summarize evaluative data collected from participants at the training sessions. The primary audience includes staff of the U. S. Office of Educational Research and Improvement, AEL, and KDE. Other audiences include staff of the Kentucky Leadership Academy, regional service centers, national and state writing programs, Highly Skilled Educators (HSEs), and other educators.

EVALUATION METHOD

Participants

Altogether, 198 individuals attended one of the training sessions: 41 at session 1, 40 at session 2, 59 at session 3, and 58 at session 4. The majority of the participants (113, 57%) were school or district administrators (principals, assessment and curriculum coordinators, resource teachers, etc.). Participants from other role groups included HSEs (39, 20%), state administrators and consultants (13, 6%), university faculty (5, 2%), and others (classroom teachers or those without an identified role) (28, 14%).

The collaborative research team invited people to the training in one of several ways. The principal means of invitation was a September 24 letter by then Commissioner William Cody, which was mailed to all HSEs, district personnel with responsibility for writing program oversight, and state and regional writing program leaders. The letter's contents described the purpose of the training and included a registration form. AEL also sent invitations to state directors of the National Writing Program. And, the AEL project director contacted the leadership of the Kentucky Leadership Academy to alert that organization to the fact that principals were receiving the invitations.

Instrumentation

An evaluation form was developed by an evaluator member of the collaborative research team. It consisted of 18 Likert-type items on a 5-point scale of satisfaction (1 = Not at all/Very little to 5 = Very much) with various aspects of the training related to content, presentation, and utility, as well as 2 open-ended response items soliciting insight into the areas of strength and weakness in the training (see Appendix B). It was submitted for comment to two other members of the research team prior to finalization. This form was administered at the first and second training sessions.

After the first two trainings, a member of the research team, realizing that the evaluation questions addressed the training process only, created another version of the form. This version added an open-ended item about the handbook contents, i.e. the study process ("My opinion of the *School Study of Writing Instruction* materials is . . ."). In order to keep the evaluation form to one page, several other changes were also made: deleting question 9 and shortening former question 10 in Section A, and deleting questions 3, 4, and 5 in Section B. The revised form consisted of 14 Likert-type items on the same 5-point scale of satisfaction and 3 open-ended response items (see Appendix C). This second version was administered at the third and fourth training sessions.

Procedures

The coordinator attended each of the four training sessions to distribute and collect the forms at the conclusion of each. Data were entered into SPSS for Windows for analysis and qualitative data were categorized by theme.

FINDINGS

Training 1: November 3, 1999

Thirty-four out of 41 participants completed an evaluation form, representing a return rate of 83%. The Cronbach alpha coefficient for this set of scores for items in Sections A and B was .90, indicating a high level of internal consistency among the items.

In Section A, participants responded to items that measured their satisfaction with various aspects of the training. The aspects of the training that they rated highest were *provided materials that will be useful* (mean of 4.85 on a 1-5 scale, standard deviation [SD] 0.36) and *increased my understanding of the School Study of Writing Instruction* (mean 4.79, SD 0.41). The lowest-rated items were *was paced well* (mean 3.88, SD 0.91) and *was conducted in an engaging manner* (mean 4.32, SD 0.73). They rated the overall quality of the training as high (mean 4.53, SD 0.61). See Table 1 for more detail.

In Section B, respondents answered items that assessed their understanding of the steps in the *School Study of Writing Instruction*. Participants rated highest two individual components of step 1: how interviewees are selected (mean of 4.68 on a 1-5 scale, SD 0.47) and how to prepare interviewers (mean 4.62, SD 0.55). Lowest rated were step 2, report writing (mean 3.88, SD 0.77), and step 3, rating and setting priorities (mean 3.84, SD 0.90). See Table 1 for more detail.

In Section C, respondents answered two open-ended response items. In response to *The most beneficial/interesting part of this training was . . .*, 25 of the 34 respondents answered (9 with a multiple response), for a total of 36 responses. Seven respondents (19%) mentioned the materials or handbook, one saying that it was "well designed and self-explanatory." Six (17%) made reference to the general format of the training, saying that they appreciated the overview or the process of going through the handbook. Five (14%) appreciated the research base behind the *School Study of Writing Instruction,* i.e., "the valid research based practice," and "learning about the research and the 36 indicators." Four (11%) named the *SSWI*'s potential utility as an improvement tool for schools. Three (8%) liked the group activities or participant involvement. Three other respondents (8%) appreciated the examples given by presenters, i.e., "information/stories from your personal experiences with this process." Two respondents (6%) complimented the presenters, specifically their flexibility to adjust to scheduling constraints or their skills to put the audience at ease, i.e., "They made you feel free to ask questions and express concerns."

The following themes merited one mention each (3% each): concise presentation; inclusion of student voice in the study process; discovery that the *SSWI* is process- rather than content-focused; the nonjudgmental, self-study aspect of the *SSWI;* and greater awareness of how to measure a school's writing process. Also, one respondent mentioned a specific *SSWI* step—rating and setting priorities.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Training 1 Evaluation Form

Item	N	Mean*	SD
Section A			
1. Was of good quality overall	34	4.53	0.61
2. Had clear outcomes	34	4.62	0.60
3. Was paced well	34	3.88	0.91
4. Had activities that reinforced the content	34	4.44	0.66
5. Was conducted in an engaging manner	34	4.32	0.73
6. Was conducted by knowledgeable and well-prepared presenters	34	4.71	0.52
7. Increased my understanding of the *School Study of Writing Instruction*	34	4.79	0.41
8. Increased my understanding of my role as a facilitator vs. other . . . roles	34	4.65	0.54
9. Enabled me to be capable of serving as a facilitator	34	4.44	0.75
10. Provided materials that will be useful to me in my future work as a facilitator	34	4.85	0.36
11. Stimulated me to want to use the skills and/or materials presented	34	4.56	0.70
Section B			
1. How to introduce the study to a faculty and Steering Committee	34	4.38	0.65
2. How the interviews step is done overall (step 1)	34	4.59	0.56
3. How interviewees are selected	34	4.68	0.47
4. How interviewers are selected	34	4.56	0.56
5. How to prepare interviewers	34	4.62	0.55
6. How the report-writing step is done (step 2)	34	3.88	0.77
7. How the rating and setting priorities session is set up and conducted (step 3)	31	3.84	0.90

*On a scale of 1 (Not at all/Very little) to 5 (Very much).

In response to *This training could have been improved by . . .*, 27 of the 34 respondents answered (9 with a multiple response), for a total of 37 responses. Twelve (32%) made a recommendation relative to the comparative time allotments per segment of the training or to the *pacing*. Eleven of these 12 stated that they would have preferred spending more time on report-writing and rating than the morning topics concerning interviewing: "maybe a little less time on the first steps (selecting interviews, etc.) and more on the end result"; "more time spent on the report and writing and less on the interviewing"; and "more focus on rating session and report writing." Two of the 12 suggested starting the training with the rating step of the *SSWI* and working backwards and two others suggested a faster pace.

Eight respondents (22%) made a suggestion concerning the materials provided. Five of the eight specifically recommended that the various forms needed to be updated and revised so that they were aligned with each other in wording and numbering. One other respondent would have liked visuals in the handbook; also, this respondent thought that the *SSWI* did not consider writing beyond portfolio preparation. Another of these eight referred to pages 149-152 and suggested that the materials and comments should better address high schools.

Four respondents (11%) suggested that more breaks be incorporated into the schedule, i.e., "More frequent breaks—sometimes the law of two feet is not exercised out of respect of presenters." Two respondents (5%) would have liked more time for the training, both suggesting 1½ days; another two would have preferred receiving the materials prior to the training in order to review them.

Each of the following themes received one mention (3% each): less time allotted for the training, frequent mini-reviews as the training proceeds, more direct participation, reconfiguring the groups after lunch, provision of copies of the overheads, provision of an agenda, and more comfortable facilities. Finally, two (5%) responded that they had no suggestions for improvement.

Training 2: November 4, 1999

Thirty-three out of 40 participants completed an evaluation form, representing a return rate of 82%. The Cronbach alpha coefficient for this set of scores for items in Sections A and B was .93, indicating a high level of internal consistency among the items.

In Section A, participants responded to items that measured their satisfaction with various aspects of the training. The aspects of the training that they rated highest were *increased my understanding of the School Study of Writing Instruction* (mean 4.67, SD 0.65) and *provided materials that will be useful* (mean 4.62, SD 0.61). The lowest-rated items were *was paced well* (mean 3.64, SD 1.39) and *was conducted in an engaging manner* (mean 3.85, SD 1.18). They rated the overall quality of the training as moderately high (mean 4.18, SD 0.88). See Table 2 for more detail.

In Section B, respondents answered items that assessed their understanding of the steps in the *School Study of Writing Instruction*. All items in Section B were rated moderately high or high, at or above 4.00 (SDs ranging from 0.61 to 1.15). Respondents had more understanding of the interviews step than they did of the report writing or rating/priorities steps. See Table 2 for more detail.

In Section C, respondents answered two open-ended response items. In response to *The most beneficial/interesting part of this training was . . .*, 23 of the 33 respondents answered (6 with a multiple response), for a total of 30 responses. Ten respondents (33%) named the handbook itself and/or other materials, i.e., the "study/binder itself—well thought out, organized, intentional—great resource for schools"; "the schedules and checklists made it less scary"; and "the hard copy examples given." Six respondents (20%) made reference to the general format of the training, specifically the

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Training 2 Evaluation Form

Item	N	Mean*	SD
Section A			
1. Was of good quality overall	33	4.18	0.88
2. Had clear outcomes	33	4.55	0.56
3. Was paced well	33	3.64	1.39
4. Had activities that reinforced the content	33	4.06	1.00
5. Was conducted in an engaging manner	33	3.85	1.18
6. Was conducted by knowledgeable and well-prepared presenters	33	4.61	0.56
7. Increased my understanding of the *School Study of Writing Instruction*	33	4.67	0.65
8. Increased my understanding of my role as a facilitator vs. other . . . roles	33	4.39	0.75
9. Enabled me to be capable of serving as a facilitator	33	4.39	0.79
10. Provided materials that will be useful to me in my future work as a facilitator	32	4.62	0.61
11. Stimulated me to want to use the skills and/or materials presented	33	4.09	1.04
Section B			
1. How to introduce the study to a faculty and Steering Committee	33	4.33	0.74
2. How the interviews step is done overall (step 1)	33	4.55	0.62
3. How interviewees are selected	33	4.55	0.71
4. How interviewers are selected	33	4.55	0.71
5. How to prepare interviewers	33	4.39	0.61
6. How the report-writing step is done (step 2)	32	4.06	0.91
7. How the rating and setting priorities session is set up and conducted (step 3)	33	4.00	1.15

*On a scale of 1 (Not at all/Very little) to 5 (Very much).

process of chronologically examining the study process steps as outlined in the handbook, i.e.,"hearing how the parts fit together in the process, understanding the how-to" and "the entire walk-through of the process." Three respondents (10%) each named a specific step of the *SSWI*: interview questions, compiling results, and rating and setting priorities. Three (10%) appreciated the research base behind the *SSWI*, i.e., "thorough, clear materials based on solid research." Three other respondents (10%) appreciated the examples given from the presenters' personal experiences of conducting the study, i.e., "your enthusiasm and sharing of first-hand experience" and "hearing about experiences of those actually involved in the process—their tips were especially helpful."

Two (7%) referred to the *SSWI*'s potential utility as an improvement tool for schools. Two others (7%) liked the group activities or participant involvement. Finally, one respondent (3%) complimented the presenters' skill, i.e., "[the] rapport of presenters with participants."

In response to *This training could have been improved by . . .*, 25 of the 33 respondents answered (7 with a multiple response), for a total of 36 responses. Eleven respondents (31%) made a recommendation relative to the comparative time allotments per segment of the training or to the *pacing*. Six of these 11 stated that they would have preferred spending more time on later topics than on earlier ones: "less time on first steering committee meeting and more time on report writing and setting priorities"; "skipping overviews, and getting to the meat of the process"; and "I'm still confused about the rating process." Yet another respondent wanted more time spent on an earlier step, "more info [*sic*] regarding selection of steering committee—this is crucial to the success of the study." Four of the 11 suggested a faster pace overall, i.e., "moving at a faster pace" and "pick up pace—some areas you belabored too much."

Similarly, four respondents (11%) suggested that the training be conducted in less time. "collapsing the time—get me the info [*sic*] and I can review it" and "cutting the time by at least half." However, two others (6%) would have preferred more time, i.e. "just wish I had been able to spend another day with you learning!"

One respondent (3%) made a suggestion concerning the materials provided, suggesting that the spelling and grammatical errors in the handbook be corrected. Two other respondents (6%) had a concern about the *SSWI* process itself, not the handbook or materials per se. One of these individuals believed that the study was not student-centered; the other thought that it was too complex—"Somehow the entire process needs to be simplified! Most schools would find this too cumbersome."

Two respondents (6%) recommended more participant involvement, i.e., "More direct participation—always hear, 'If we had the time we would do . . .' Perhaps we take that time"; and "The participants needed to do a 'mock' school study in order to internalize the complete process." Also commenting about format, one respondent (3%) answered, "More practical—what will be faced—how to deal—how to cause quality work to happen." One respondent (3%) recommended using larger overhead transparencies or providing copies of them because he or she could not see them adequately; one suggested playing a video for the audience; and one would have preferred receiving the materials prior to the training in order to review them.

Also, there were two miscellaneous responses (3% each): one respondent would have liked more information about how to market the *SSWI* to a district and elicit its commitment, and another asked whether facilitators would be paid.

Finally, eight respondents (22%) provided complimentary remarks or indicated that they had no suggestions. Sample comments include "Well constructed study and excellent materials" and "The presenters were motivating, and I look forward to facilitating a *School Study of Writing Instruction*."

Training 3: November 17, 1999

Thirty-four out of 59 participants completed an evaluation form, representing a return rate of 58%. The Cronbach alpha coefficient for this set of scores for items in Sections A and B was .91, indicating a high level of internal consistency among the items.

In Section A, participants responded to items that measured their satisfaction with various aspects of the training. The aspects of the training that they rated highest were *was conducted by knowledgeable and well-prepared presenters* (mean 4.71, SD 0.52), *increased my understanding of the School Study of Writing Instruction* (mean 4.71, SD 0.52), and *provided materials that will be useful* (mean 4.71, SD 0.58). The lowest-rated items were *was paced well* (mean 4.18, SD 0.80) and *was conducted in an engaging manner* (mean 4.18, SD 0.83). They rated the overall quality of the training as moderately high to high (mean 4.47, SD 0.66). See Table 3 for more detail.

In Section B, respondents answered items that assessed their understanding of the steps in the *School Study of Writing Instruction*. All items in Section B were rated moderately high to high, at or above 4.13 (SDs ranging from 0.62 to 0.78). Respondents understood the interviews step the most and the rating and priorities step the least. See Table 3 for more detail.

In Section C, respondents answered three open-ended response items. In response to *My opinion of the School Study of Writing Instruction materials is . . .*, 30 of the 34 respondents answered (6 with a multiple response), for a total of 36 responses. Fifteen respondents (42%) referred to the *SSWI* as a helpful, beneficial, useful, or very useful tool for school improvement, i.e., "immediately useful"; "a very useful and timely tool"; "has much potential to improve school writing programs"; and "a quality program if a school has identified writing as a priority need." One respondent (3%) felt that the *SSWI* was "Crucial to schools in our district. I'm not sure if we can pull this off because of PD [*sic*] time this year, at least in some schools." Four respondents (11%) described the *SSWI* as outstanding, valuable, or "good stuff!"; of these, one commented further: "Outstanding process! Should provide critical data for staff use. Follows best practice and adult learning principles." Two respondents (6%) were less hyperbolic in their praise of the *SSWI*, saying that it was a good process.

Six respondents (17%) actually described the usability of the *SSWI* materials themselves. Four of these used terms such as user-friendly, ready-to-use, or self-explanatory and easily followed. One said that it was well-organized. One said simply, "OK." One isolated response (3%) indirectly referred to the usability of the materials, "The crucial part will be the sales at the beginning because of the committment [*sic*] of time. It should not be rushed."

In addition, five other respondents (14%) commented on the *SSWI's* utility, specifically for school consolidated planning and needs assessment, i.e., "useful, especially for consolidated planning" and "an effective self-evaluation tool." One respondent (3%) suggested that it would be useful for grant-writing purposes. Finally, a miscellaneous response (3%) was "something that is growing—very informative," but it was unclear whether the respondent meant the training in general or the materials specifically.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Training 3 Evaluation Form

Item	N	Mean*	SD
Section A			
1. Was of good quality overall	34	4.47	0.66
2. Had clear outcomes	34	4.59	0.61
3. Was paced well	34	4.18	0.80
4. Had activities that reinforced the content	33	4.42	0.61
5. Was conducted in an engaging manner	34	4.18	0.83
6. Was conducted by knowledgeable and well-prepared presenters	34	4.71	0.52
7. Increased my understanding of the *School Study of Writing Instruction*	34	4.71	0.52
8. Increased my understanding of my role as a facilitator vs. other . . . roles	34	4.56	0.61
9. Provided materials that will be useful to me	34	4.71	0.58
10. Stimulated me to want to use the skills and/or materials presented	34	4.50	0.71
Section B			
1. How to introduce the study to a faculty and Steering Committee	34	4.35	0.65
2. How the interviews step is done overall (step 1)	34	4.50	0.62
3. How the report-writing step is done (step 2)	33	4.30	0.64
4. How the rating and setting priorities session is set up and conducted (step 3)	30	4.13	0.78

*On a scale of 1 (Not at all/Very little) to 5 (Very much).

In response to *The most beneficial/interesting part of this training was . . .*, 25 of the 34 respondents answered (5 with a multiple response), for a total of 30 responses. Seven respondents (23%) named specific steps of the *SSWI* or parts of the *SSWI* handbook: five the practice in compiling interviews or the interview protocols themselves, one the practice in rating, and one the rating guide. Five respondents (17%) made reference to the general format of the training, specifically the process of chronologically examining the study process steps as outlined in the handbook: i.e., "the 'guided' explanations of the process"; "step-by-step, no gray areas"; "taking us all the way through the process with the materials"; and "going through the notebook and having the time to read the material as we went." Four respondents (13%) commented on the whole training in general or increased knowledge from it, i.e., "The entire program was enchanting! I love it!" and "increased awareness of the writing program." Three respondents (10%) named the handbook or materials. Two respondents (7%) appreciated the activities parts of the format, i.e., "Actually doing the processes discussed helped me most. The simulations gave me a deeper understanding of how to conduct this study." One respondent (3%) appreciated the expertise of the presenters, i.e., "having presenters who have experienced the study."

Eight respondents (27%) seemed to reflect on the *SSWI* process rather than on the training. Of these, six respondents commented on the *SSWI's* utility for consolidated planning or needs assessment, one specifying planning for professional development needs. Two liked the depth or applicability of the study process, i.e., "very comprehensive process" and "actual school application."

In response to *This training could have been improved by . . .*, 14 of the 34 respondents answered (1 with a multiple response), for a total of 16 responses. Three respondents (19%) made a recommendation relative to the comparative time allotments per segment of the training or to the *pacing*, one specifying a preference to have spent more time on report writing and rating. Two (12%) commented on the handbook, one suggesting "a better organizer for compiling the report" and the other saying that the teacher interview is too long. Four other respondents (25%) expressed a wish for one of the following aspects of the format or training materials: more hands-on activities, tape transcripts to follow as listening, copies of overheads, and copies of handouts.

Three respondents (19%) commented on the logistics of the training. Two suggested a change in room temperature and one suggested scheduling more breaks. One respondent (6%) wanted guidance on how to market the *SSWI*. Two respondents (12%) indicated that they had no suggestions. Finally, one response (6%) was idiosyncratic, the respondent saying that he or she did not realize that the event was to be a training session.

Training 4: November 18, 1999

Thirty-three out of 58 participants completed an evaluation form, representing a return rate of 57%. The Cronbach alpha coefficient for this set of scores for items in Sections A and B was .92, indicating a high level of internal consistency among the items.

In Section A, participants responded to items that measured their satisfaction with various aspects of the training. The aspects of the training that they rated highest were *was conducted by knowledgeable and well-prepared presenters* (mean 4.88, SD 0.33) and *provided materials that will be useful* (mean 4.85, SD 0.36). The lowest-rated items were *was paced well* (mean 4.61, SD 0.66) and *had activities that reinforced the content* (mean 4.62, SD 0.61). They rated the overall quality of the training as high (mean 4.75, SD 0.51). See Table 4 for more detail.

In Section B, respondents answered items that assessed their understanding of the steps in the *School Study of Writing Instruction*. All items in Section B were rated moderately high to high, at or above 4.30 (SDs ranging from 0.57 to 0.73). Respondents understood the interviews step the most and the report-writing step the least. See Table 4 for more detail.

In Section C, respondents answered three open-ended response items. In response to *My opinion of the School Study of Writing Instruction materials is . . .*, 30 of the 33 respondents answered (5 with a multiple response), for a total of 36 responses. Twelve respondents (33%) referred to the *SSWI* as a very helpful, very beneficial, useful, or very useful tool for school improvement. One of these 12 commented, "Very beneficial to schools—especially those that are

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics for Training 4 Evaluation Form

Item	N	Mean*	SD
Section A			
1. Was of good quality overall	32	4.75	0.51
2. Had clear outcomes	33	4.79	0.42
3. Was paced well	33	4.61	0.66
4. Had activities that reinforced the content	32	4.62	0.61
5. Was conducted in an engaging manner	33	4.70	0.59
6. Was conducted by knowledgeable and well-prepared presenters	33	4.88	0.33
7. Increased my understanding of the *School Study of Writing Instruction*	33	4.79	0.42
8. Increased my understanding of my role as a facilitator vs. other . . . roles	33	4.67	0.54
9. Provided materials that will be useful to me	33	4.85	0.36
10. Stimulated me to want to use the skills and/or materials presented	32	4.66	0.48
Section B			
1. How to introduce the study to a faculty and Steering Committee	33	4.39	0.66
2. How the interviews step is done overall (step 1)	33	4.48	0.57
3. How the report-writing step is done (step 2)	33	4.30	0.73
4. How the rating and setting priorities session is set up and conducted (step 3)	33	4.36	0.70

*On a scale of 1 (Not at all/Very little) to 5 (Very much).

high-achieving and needing to make those gains." A lone respondent felt that the *SSWI* was more than just useful: "Very useful—vital if school is serious about improving writing." Similarly, another 10 respondents (28%) described the *SSWI* as excellent, great, high, very good, or distinguished.

Nine respondents (25%) actually described the usability of the *SSWI* materials themselves. Four of the nine called them very well organized, very well done, or well developed. Two said that the materials were clear and concise. Two described them as "manageable, useable" or "easy to follow." One respondent said that the materials were attractive.

In addition, four other respondents (11%) commented on the *SSWI's* utility, specifically for school consolidated planning and needs assessment, i.e., "I like this. I believe it can give direction to staffs. It can be made a part of the needs assessment to our CP [sic]."

In response to *The most beneficial/interesting part of this training was . . .*, 27 of the 33 respondents answered (3 with a multiple response), for a total of 30 responses. Six respondents (20%) named specific steps of the *SSWI* or parts of the *SSWI* handbook: three the rating guide, two the practice in rating, and one reading the samples. Five respondents (17%) commented on the whole training in general or the opportunity it provided for reflection, i.e., "It was all great"; "just understanding the overall picture of how it works"; and "reflection on writing instruction." Five others (17%) simply noted the handbook or materials. One respondent (3%) made reference to the general format of the training, specifically the process of systematically examining the study process steps as outlined in the handbook, i.e., "walk through of process." Another (3%) appreciated the activities parts of the format, i.e., "hands-on work with the materials." In addition, one respondent (3%) said learning the duties of the facilitator was the most beneficial/interesting part of the training and another (3%) complimented the presenters as outstanding.

Nine respondents (30%) seemed to reflect on the *SSWI* process more than on the training itself. Of these, four had comments about the mechanism of analysis inherent in the study:

- The most interesting part is forming the perspective from the interview comments.
- The fact that in the interviews teachers/students/administrators must self-evaluate their writing perceptions, practices, and beliefs.
- Seeing the whole thing come together in a rating.
- The insights gained by faculties as a result of having done this process.

Two respondents commented on the *SSWI's* utility for consolidated planning or needs assessment. Three appreciated the research background to the creation of the *SSWI*, i.e., "the fact that indicators have been identified."

In response to *This training could have been improved by . . .*, 18 of the 33 respondents answered (2 with a multiple response), for a total of 20 responses. Two respondents (10%) made a recommendation relative to the comparative time allotments per segment of the training or to the *pacing*, with one specifying a preference to have spent more time on report writing and one specifying time for analyzing sample data. And, although two respondents (10%) suggested that more time be allotted for the training, another (5%) suggested that the training be done in less time.

Regarding other format aspects, two respondents (10%) recommended more hands-on activities. One (5%) suggested a smaller group format and another (5%) would have preferred videotaped, rather than audiotaped, segments. Two (10%) commented on the handbook and/or materials, one stating that they needed to be current and the other stating that they needed more piloting.

Four respondents (20%) commented on the logistics of the training. Three recommended a change in the facilities or room arrangement and one suggested a change in room temperature. Finally, five respondents (25%) had no suggestions for improving the training.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Given participants' ratings and comments, we conclude that the *School Study of Writing Instruction* is viewed as a well-designed, research-based, and self-explanatory tool that schools could use in their improvement efforts targeting writing instruction. Respondents seem particularly pleased with the potential benefits of the process and feel the handbook has great utility for consolidation planning and needs assessment. We recommend that AEL continue investigating ways to market this product as a mechanism to help schools in their ongoing improvement efforts.

We conclude that the four *SSWI* training sessions were well received and successfully accomplished their three-fold purpose of introducing the research findings and study process, preparing participants to promote use of the *SSWI* in schools, and instructing participants in the tasks required to facilitate the study. Respondents seem well satisfied with the format and content of the training, in particular noting the usefulness of the material and their increased understanding of the *SSWI*. However, we recommend that staff investigate and remediate for future trainings the circumstances that led to the low evaluation response rate for sessions 3 and 4, even though staff were present to collect the forms. Results for these two sessions may be skewed due to the high nonresponse rate.

In general, participants seem to best understand step 1 of the *SSWI* process, which focuses on the interviews. Less well understood are step 2 (report writing) and step 3 (rating and setting priorities). This perception is reflected in numerous participant comments that too much time was devoted to the initial step and not enough time was provided for covering the later topics. Therefore, if future training sessions are offered, more time and focus should be given to these two critical steps.

Participants seem to have differing viewpoints on the timing or pacing of the training sessions. In each of the sessions except for the third, some respondents requested extending the training to more fully cover the content, others felt the session should be shortened and the pace increased, and still others were content with the training as provided. With such a diversity of opinions, it seems that the length of the training lies somewhere in the "happy medium" and satisfies the majority of participants. Therefore, we recommend not altering the one-day time frame for future trainings.

There is a general consensus among participants that the materials are well organized and easy to use, though some feel the handbook needs to be finalized. Several participants suggested the handbook materials be updated and typographical errors corrected. Therefore, we recommend the *SSWI* handbook be carefully reviewed and revised before any further dissemination takes place.

Finally, many participants are in agreement that it would be more useful to receive the handbook prior to the training. This would allow participants to review and become at least somewhat familiar with the materials in advance of the training. We recommend that the handbook be disseminated prior to training and that participants receive copies of overheads used throughout the training.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A:
Training Agenda

School Study of Writing Instruction
Facilitator's Guide

NOTE: Be sure to provide 5 or so sign-in sheets for participants so that activity during student selection portion can be implemented.

I. Introduction (30 minutes) 8:30

Welcome and Housekeeping (5)

- Guidelines for day, parking lot, breaks, etc.
- STRESS that this is a FULL day's training, that leaving early will diminish the effectiveness of the objectives, and those who leave prior to its completion will not understand the final steps as well as the true value of the process.

Purpose/Goals (5)

- To prepare external facilitators with the information and skills necessary to assist school personnel with implementation of the *School Study of Writing Instruction*

Objectives

- Participants will
  1. Examine collaborative research by the Kentucky Writing Program and the Appalachia Educational Laboratory
  2. Become familiar with *School Study of Writing Instruction* (SSWI) handbook
     ***Participants should make notes as we work through materials*
  3. Understand and acquire facilitation strategies to assist schools through the process and procedures

OH 1 - Purpose and Objectives

OH 2 - Core Components of Training

***4 Interrelated training components: Knowledge, Demonstration, Practice, Feedback*

History of KWP (2)

OH 3 and Handbook

Information about AEL (3)

OH 4 and Handbook

History of Research and Collaboration (3)

OH 5 -Timeline

Facilitator's Role (12)

- Use "Nominal Group Process" to identify important roles of a skillful

Facilitator **OH 6**

1. Each participant writes ideas on individual post-its (1 idea per post-it) for trainer to share and post on chart.
2. Trainer writes the following categories on chart.
   - confidentiality
   - school's sense of ownership
   - facilitation, rather than judgment
   - difference between audit/evaluation and facilitation of self-evaluation

II. Overview of SSWI Handbook (40 minutes) 9:00 am

Predicting Activity (10)

(Remind participants that all discussions will be quick (like quick writes) 1st thoughts, due to time constraints)

- Using OH, work together to predict answers.
  OH 7A – Questions from p. 1 SSWI handbook:
  Why undertake a school study of writing instruction?
  Who might benefit from this study?
  What does the study process involve?
  How long will it take to complete the process?

  - **OH 7B**
    Small groups will:
    1. Predict answers to questions before opening manual.
    2. Read text to determine agreement (p. 1 of Overview).
    3. Revise answers.
  - Whole group – brief discussion.

- **Preparing for the Task (7)**
  - Ask 3 individuals to read #1, #2 and A-E "Preparation for Undertaking the Study", page 2, with trainer emphasizing the following points for the entire group:
    4. "selling" for faculty buy-in
    5. makeup of the steering committee (not too many)
    6. following timeline (not spread out over too much time)

***Refer to Facilitator's Notes in handbook: participants need to insert into their handbooks according to directions at top of these notes to read later as a review summary before working with school.*

- **Materials Needed (1)**
  - Reminder of research information from earlier activity (history of project, etc.)

- Importance of each committee member having handbook.
- Emphasize our role today of familiarity with handbook

- **Steps in Process (1)**
  OH 8 - 4 Steps (p. 3)
  - Participants read – in-depth discussion will occur later in training

- **Time Required (8)**
  OH 9 - bottom of p. 3 and refer to chart, p. 4 (Summary of time required)
  - Participants review time and task summary independently.
    1. Use post-its to write questions as information is reviewed (attach Post-its on edges of that page so can refer to them later).
    2. Initiate thinking about passage, no answers at this time

- **Duties of the Steering Committee (13)**
  - Participants read silently to discover the responsibilities of the steering committee and highlight important information from A - H (p. 7).
    1. A-F Planning Meeting and Data Gathering
    2. G-H Report Writing (most time-consuming) and Rating/Planning Meeting

  OH 10 - Steering Committee Responsibilities
  OH 11 - Summary on p.8 for Review.

***Re-emphasize at this point that the information we have covered thus far (the overview information and first four pages) is the information to be presented to the school community during the selling/ownership meeting and/or with the steering committee at its first planning meeting.* *(Go to page 5)*

III. Interviews – The raw data on which everything else is based 9:40

Preparing for the Interviews (10)
Using **OH 12,** discuss how to help steering committee prepare for interviews:
- Select teachers to be interviewed
- Select students to be interviewed
- Select central office administrator to be interviewed
- Identify and prepare people to conduct interviews with teachers, students, and administrators
- Prepare to conduct interviews
- Designate a person to receive/collect interviews

- **Importance of Random Selection (10)**

- Using **OH 13 -Purpose of Random Selection,** discuss paragraph 1 on p. 15 in handbook.
  1. Learn whether teachers have understanding of how to implement writing instruction
  2. Discover how students are responding to writing instruction
  3. Information for "your" school
  4. Be accurate in your school's "picture" (No need to select those who can present "best" picture)

- Read/discuss 2nd paragraph
  1. Add scenarios/ "What if's" using **OH 13a**
  2. Refer to examples from "Stories from Kentucky Schools" in back of handbook.

** *Emphasize student voice and randomness*

BREAK **10:00**

2. NOTE: TIME will be a big factor in this section.

- **Selecting Teachers to be Interviewed (12) 10:10**

  - Small Group Activity With "What If's"
    Use **OH 14** to describe the task (trainer cut "what if's into strips ahead of time and give one to each group)
    1. Choose a recorder, reporter, timer, and facilitator in each group
    2. Read your group's "What if?"
    3. Read the "Teacher Selection Method" sections on pp. 15 through top of 17 and then to top of 18
    4. Group discusses the "what-if" in relation to your reading (quick talk)
    5. Determine whether or not the selection method is appropriate or inappropriate.
    6. Explain why or why not

  - Whole Group Activity **(POSSIBLY OMIT IF RUNNING BEHIND)**
    Each group reports briefly for whole group.
    On overhead or chart, trainer highlights important points made by group reporting.

- **Selecting Students to be Interviewed (13)**

***Note: Trainer will do this in first steering committee meeting. See page 11-1 through 11-3 in Facilitator's Notes (to be inserted before page 5 in handbook) and beginning on*

the bottom of page 17-18, and 19-20 in handbook.

- **Stratified Random Sampling Activity: Simulation of student selection.**
  - Follow the procedure given on student interviews, pp. 17-20.
    1. Use one table of participants to represent the steering committee.
    2. Use the 5 morning sign-in sheets to represent class lists of selected teachers.
    3. Place pre-selected numbers (see p. 19) in a container.
    4. Ask a "steering committee member" to draw a number from "Teacher #1's" class list.
    5. Locate the name on that sheet.
    6. Another "steering committee member" records the name
    7. Return numbered slip of paper to the container.
    8. Repeat steps 2 - 7 and continue drawing until one student from each selected teacher (i.e., the morning sign-in sheets) is identified
    9. Return to first class list. Repeat the process to model HOW to continue random selection from class lists.

*** Role-play: Horror about some student names selected, etc.*

1. **OH 15** - Emphasize:
   - Identify MORE than needed.
   - Repeat - This is MINIMUM number of students to select. To interview MORE is great but may complicate report writing.
   - Emphasize MUST be random.

2. After simulation, review, read and highlight procedure in handbook, pages 11-12-13.
   - Reward a candy bar to each person whose name is selected.

- **Selection of Interviewers/Teams (15)** **10:35**
  - Individually, **highlight** important points to remember from "Interviewer Selection Guide" top of page 11 in handbook.

*** Note: Emphasize selection of interview TEAMS.*

- **OH 16** Whole Group/Small Group Activity
  1. **Identify** main points on page.
  2. **Brainstorm** in small groups (2 minutes) to **create on a post-it** a list of persons from own school community who might make good interviewers. **Recall** the suggestions on the page for selection.

3. **Each group shares one** not previously shared and **explains why that person was chosen**.
4. **Chart** as whole group shares out to create one list
5. Facilitator will **reinforce** or share others which worked well for field-test schools. (Have chart prepared from field-test pilot for other information and compare.)
6. **Collect and display post-its** for later review.

- Additional question: *Who might not be successful?*
  OH 17 - Address briefly these scenarios:
  - Teacher interviewing another teacher?
  - Parent interviewing own child?
  - Teacher from previous year interviewing student, etc.

  After each ask, "Could this be a problem? How?"

- **Preparation of Interviewers (20) 10:50**
  - Read for key points in "Interviewer Preparation Guide" and "Training Interviewers," pp.11-13 in handbook.

NOTE: If time is short, cut out the following two activities, beginning again with "Teacher Interviews" and summarize.

- Create, with a partner, a graphic to share this information
  OH 18 – Directions for preparing the graphic
  1. Read for key points
  2. Consider how you would best organize and summarize this information
  3. Create, with a partner, a draft of a graphic to share this information with those interviewers selected at your designated school
  4. Post the draft of your graphic on the wall to share

  ***Materials needed: typing paper, markers, chart paper*
- Do **Carousel Walk at lunch**. Participants write name on post-it for a copy of any graphic to be used at their school(s).

- **Teacher interviews (20) 11:10**
  - Participants will assume the role of an interviewer preparing for a teacher interview.
    1. **Read** "Teacher Interview Instructions," on p. 22 in handbook, **review** the checklist and materials list on page 22 and **scan** the "Teacher Interview Schedule" on p. 21.

***Use* **OH 20** - *Checklist, Materials List (p. 22) and* **OH 21** - *Teacher Interview Schedule (page 21) to show participants handbook pages to consult.*

2. **Jigsaw** in small groups to review the 50 questions on the teacher interview form.
3. Participants place Post-its with possible questions in appropriate spots.
4. **Share** possible questions in whole group.

***As trainers we must be prepared to answer and know possible trouble spots and areas for probing.*

- Trainers will role-play (model) an interview for 2 or 3 questions
  Ask a participant to serve as scribe on overhead and co-questioner.

Lunch 11:30 – 12:30 (Maybe - take less time if running behind)

- **Preparing Student Interviewers (20) 12:30**
  - Participants will assume the role of an interviewer preparing for a student interview. **(10)**

    OH 22
    1. **Read** "Student Interview Instructions," on p.36 in handbook
    2. **Review** the checklist and materials list
    3. **Scan** the "Student Interview Schedule" on p.35.

    ***Use* **OH 23A and OH 23B** - *Checklist, Materials List, Student Interview Schedule– to show participants the pages to consult.*

    4. **OH 23 C** Point out differences in teacher and student interviews:
       - Work with a partner
       - Put students at ease, explain process, etc.
       - Interview 2 or 3 students together
       - If question is not understood, rephrase or give an example

  - **Share copy of script** (or play tape) from AEL of excerpt from student interview which shows "probing."
- **Review student interview questions on pages 37-44 (15) 12:50**
  - Compare to teacher interview questions
    5. Direct participants to note differences/similarities of questions on post-its
    6. Lead brief whole group discussion pointing out questions which might require probing

***Note: May require some modeling by trainers.*

- **Preparing for Principal and Central Office Interviews (10) 1:05**
  - **OH 24** Direct participants to highlight the following points on pages 45 and 55 in their handbooks :
    1. Who will do these interviews?
    2. How will these likely be different?
    3. What problems might arise?

*** Emphasize confidentiality.*

  - **OH 25** Quickly scan :
    1. Principal Interview Instructions on p 45 of handbook.
    2. District Administrator Interview Instructions on p. 55
    3. After reading, have participants note the differences in opening paragraph of each
    4. Discuss these differences

- **Brief whole-group summary (5)**
  - Tips for interviewer (*Refer to Facilitator Notes, 111-1 through 111-3, and have participants insert before page 9 in handbook*)
    1. Some interviewees will tell you false perceptions. What to do?
    2. Write what they say?
    3. Watch interviewer's body language
    4. Discuss scheduling of interviews -- leaving time between, avoiding lunch, etc.

- **Review of Duties and Meeting #1 (5) 1:20**
  - Return to **OH** of Steering Committee Duties) **OH 10**: *Note: We've covered A - F.*
  - Use **OH 26** of **Sample Agenda for First Steering Committee Meeting** (page 5)

IV. Developing the Report (Planning Meeting #2) (45) 1:25

- **Compiling information from the interviews (15)**
  - Distribute compiled interview response forms excerpts
    1. Note the way information has been entered (by a typist) for ease of report writing.
    2. Point out how comments are coded by role (4th grade student, content area teacher, etc.) and for confidentiality.

****Refer to bottom of page 61 and 62 to remind interviewers to identify teachers by grade level/ and whether teachers are content (not SS or PE) or LA teacher, and students by grade levels.*

    1. Emphasize that typist makes no judgment calls but types

only what each interviewee said as recorded on the individual interview forms

2. Emphasize "Other" section for adding extra information.

***See Directions for Compiling Interview Responses, pp. 61 and 62 in handbook for further explanation/clarification.*

BREAK **1:40 – 1:50**

- **Writing the Report (25)** **1:50**
  - Using the table on pages 69-72 and the report form on pages 73-94, simulate selection of committee members to develop each of the 8 report sections.
    1. Participants will assume the roles of committee members
    2. Participants will examine the section of sample completed reports for which they are responsible (both a thorough one -- copy is in sleeve of each handbook -- and a lean one (pilot school report from field study materials) -- *trainer puts one copy on each table made on colored paper for easy retrieval after this activity by trainer*).

**** Note: trainer may also want to make OH of one or two lean pages so all can see!*

1. Facilitator will lead discussion of the advantages/disadvantages of the two samples in achieving the goals of the study.

  - Review directions for writing the report (pages 67-68)
    1. Facilitator uses **OH 27** to talk through process
    2. Insert pages IV from Facilitator Notes before page 63 in handbook.

  - Practice writing the report
    1. Participants will write one section of the report. For discussion purposes, all participants will write the same section **(9A)**
    2. Whole group shares one or two reports and discusses any possible difficulties which may arise.

***Purpose of this task is to learn procedure for writing report and to think through possible questions.*

  - Review of Planning Meeting #2 **2:15**
    1. Use "Steering Committee Meeting to Prepare to Write Report," page 63, to lead discussion and answer questions.
       Refer also to pages 137-138: "Indicators that distinguish consistently improving from consistently declining schools"

III. Preparing for the Meeting to Plan the Faculty Meeting to Assess the Writing Program and to Determine Priorities for Action (45) 2:25

> ***Trainer emphasizes this as most challenging part of the process.***
> - ***Organization is key.***
> - ***Proper preparation is urgent.***
>
> ***This meeting has the potential for creating a collaborative, team atmosphere among faculty OR for causing division/confusion.***

- **Understanding the meeting process (15)**
  - Give each table a fictitious school information sheet **(Handout)** to use for the following activity:
    1. Use **OH 28– questions and directions** to guide participants in the activity.
    2. Participants will read about the rating meeting process on pages 97-99 to answer the following questions:
       - Who is reviewing the report for your school?
       - How are the groups organized?
       - Are the group sizes as recommended in the guide?
       - If not, why not?
       - Are the indicator numbers assigned fairly?
       - Were the participants given an opportunity to review the report before the meeting?
    3. Be prepared to share your information with the whole group and support your answers with information from the manual.
    4. Find in Facilitator's Notes page V; insert before page 95 in handbook.
  - Go over Checklist for Rating/Planning meeting on page 95.
    1. Use **OH 29** to review the preparations for the meeting

> ***Emphasize (1) "Organization is the key" AND (2) Proper preparation is essential*

- **Steps in the Rating Process (20)**
  - Read and discuss rating directions on p. 104 of the handbook.
  - Using a sample report, divide it into sections and assign one section to each group. Have participants will attempt to complete the rating guide for that school. Follow the directions just read and discussed. Emphasize any difficulties they may have.

    Use **OH 30** to provide the following directions:

1. Rate individually
2. Get a group consensus
3. Chart findings on graph
4. Share with whole group

IF TIME IS SHORT: Use only section 9A on page 120 and rate that indicator.

- **Procedure for preliminary setting of priorities (10)**
  - Directions for group walk-around
    1. Each participant will be given a colored dot.
    2. In a walk-around, participants will use the colored dot to identify what they consider the most crucial areas for action
    3. Whole group will then reach consensus on those areas of greatest need
    4. After reaching consensus, recommendations will be made to CP committee for action or another meeting time can be set to determine how to meet these needs.

IF TIME IS SHORT:
1. On page 134, look at graph of low profile or high profile school.
2. Choose several possible priorities for choices, discussing why some would be better than others.

- **Review of Rating Planning Meeting (5)**
  - Use **OH** of Agenda for Rating/Planning Meeting (see Handbook pp. 101-103 and handouts for related information) to review this meeting. Note the points given at the beginning of this section.

VI. Reflection/Evaluation 3:10

Appendix B:
Evaluation Form for Sessions 1 and 2

Date:_____

Evaluation of the
Facilitator Training in the *School Study of Writing Instruction*

Thank you for your participation in this training. Your evaluation will help us continually improve our services to meet your professional needs. Please take a few moments to tell us what you thought of the training. Your responses will remain anonymous and confidential.

Section A: Circle the number that best indicates the extent to which this training . . .

		Not at all				Very much
1.	Was of good quality overall.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Had clear outcomes.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Was paced well.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Had activities that reinforced the content.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Was conducted in an engaging manner.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Was conducted by knowledgeable and well-prepared presenters.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Increased my understanding of the School Study of Writing Instruction.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Increased my understanding of my role as a facilitator versus other, evaluative roles.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Enabled me to be capable of serving as a facilitator.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Provided materials that will be useful to me in my future work as an facilitator.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Stimulated me to want to use the skills and/or materials presented.	1	2	3	4	5

Section B: Circle the number that best represents your current level of understanding about . . .

		Very little				Very much
1.	How to introduce the study to both a faculty and a school's Steering Committee.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	How the interviews step is done overall (step 1).	1	2	3	4	5
3.	How interviewees are selected.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	How interviewers are selected.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	How to prepare interviewers.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	How the report-writing step is done (step 2).	1	2	3	4	5
7.	How the rating and setting priorities session is set up and conducted (step 3).	1	2	3	4	5

Section C: Please respond to the following prompts (use reverse side if needed).

1. The most beneficial/interesting part of this training was . . .

2. This training could have been improved by . . .

Thank you! This training was presented by the Kentucky Department of Education and AEL, Inc.

Appendix C:
Evaluation Form for Sessions 3 and 4

Date: _____

Evaluation of the
Facilitator Training in the *School Study of Writing Instruction*

Thank you for your participation in this training. Your evaluation will help us continually improve our services to meet your professional needs. Please take a few moments to tell us what you thought of the training. Your responses will remain anonymous and confidential.

Section A: Circle the number that best indicates the extent to which this training . . .

	Not at all				Very much
1. Was of good quality overall.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Had clear outcomes.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Was paced well.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Had activities that reinforced the content.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Was conducted in an engaging manner.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Was conducted by knowledgeable and well-prepared presenters.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Increased my understanding of the School Study of Writing Instruction.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Increased my understanding of my role as a facilitator versus other, evaluative roles.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Provided materials that will be useful to me.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Stimulated me to want to use the skills and/or materials presented.	1	2	3	4	5

Section B: Circle the number that best represents your current level of understanding about . . .

	Very little				Very much
	1	2	3	4	5
1. How to introduce the study to both a faculty and a school's Steering Committee.	1	2	3	4	5
2. How the interviews step is done overall (step 1)	1	2	3	4	5
3. How the report-writing step is done (step 2).	1	2	3	4	5
4. How the rating and setting priorities session is set up and conducted (step 3).	1	2	3	4	5

Section C: Please respond to the following prompts (use reverse side if needed).

1. My opinion of the School Study of Writing Instruction materials is:

2. The most beneficial/interesting part of this training was . . .

3. This training could have been improved by . . .

Thank you! This training was presented by the Kentucky Department of Education and AEL, Inc.

Appendix D:
Completed Evaluation *Standards* Checklist

Checklist for Applying the Standards

To interpret the information provided on this form, the reader needs to refer to the full text of the standards as they appear in Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, *The Program Evaluation Standards* (1994), Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage.

The Standards were consulted and used as indicated in the table below (check as appropriate):

Descriptor		The Standard was addressed	The Standard was partially addressed	The Standard was not addressed	The Standard was not applicable
U1	Stakeholder Identification	x			
U2	Evaluator Credibility	x			
U3	Information Scope and Selection	x			
U4	Values Identification	x			
U5	Report Clarity	x			
U6	Report Timeliness and Dissemination	x			
U7	Evaluation Impact	x			
F1	Practical Procedures	x			
F2	Political Viability	x			
F3	Cost Effectiveness	x			
P1	Service Orientation	x			
P2	Formal Agreements	x			
P3	Rights of Human Subjects	x			
P4	Human Interactions	x			
P5	Complete and Fair Assessment	x			
P6	Disclosure of Findings	x			
P7	Conflict of Interest	x			
P8	Fiscal Responsibility	x			
A1	Program Documentation	x			
A2	Context Analysis	x			
A3	Described Purposes and Procedures	x			
A4	Defensible Information Sources	x			
A5	Valid Information	x			
A6	Reliable Information	x			
A7	Systematic Information	x			
A8	Analysis of Quantitative Information	x			
A9	Analysis of Qualitative Information	x			
A10	Justified Conclusions	x			
A11	Impartial Reporting	x			
A12	Metaevaluation	x			

The Program Evaluation Standards (1994, Sage) guided the development of this (check one):

____ request for evaluation plan/design/proposal
____ evaluation plan/design/proposal
____ evaluation contract
_x_ evaluation report
____ other: _____

Name Kimberly S. Cowley Date July 2000

Kimberly S. Cowley
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